



EAST AFRICAN INSTITUTE
for Peace & Governance

My Timely Tour to LasAnod

On 26th of September, around 3:30 PM, I along with my co-worker Roble have embarked on our trip to LasAnod from Garowe city of Puntland administration. The distance between the two cities is 125 Kilometers, roughly two-hours drive. For me, it was the first time that I have ever visited to the beautiful city of LasAnod, my companion does the same. Our aim of the trip was, to see the city as experience, be familiar with the respectful people of the town, to pay a courtesy visit to the local authority, the traditional elders “**Garaads**”, and on top of that, the newly elected leader/would-be president of SSC/Khatumo administration.

Throughout, our observation was that, the local people had engaged in cleaning the symbolic remnants of the previous administration “**Somaliland**”, and replacing it the blue colored flag of Somalia.

The Outlook of the City after Eight months of Devastating War

The city of LasAnod has experienced eight-months of devastating war between the Somaliland Administration and the SSC/Khatumo local fighters. According to a reliable source, more than six hundred (600) people of the local community in LasAnod have been passed away, more than three-thousand (3,000) others have sustained injuries, while more than two-hundred and fifty thousand (250,000) of people have displaced from the city due to the protracted conflicts.

Despite the implications of the war, yet the people were beaming, and the business was restoring incrementally. I loved it.

Meeting with the Mayor

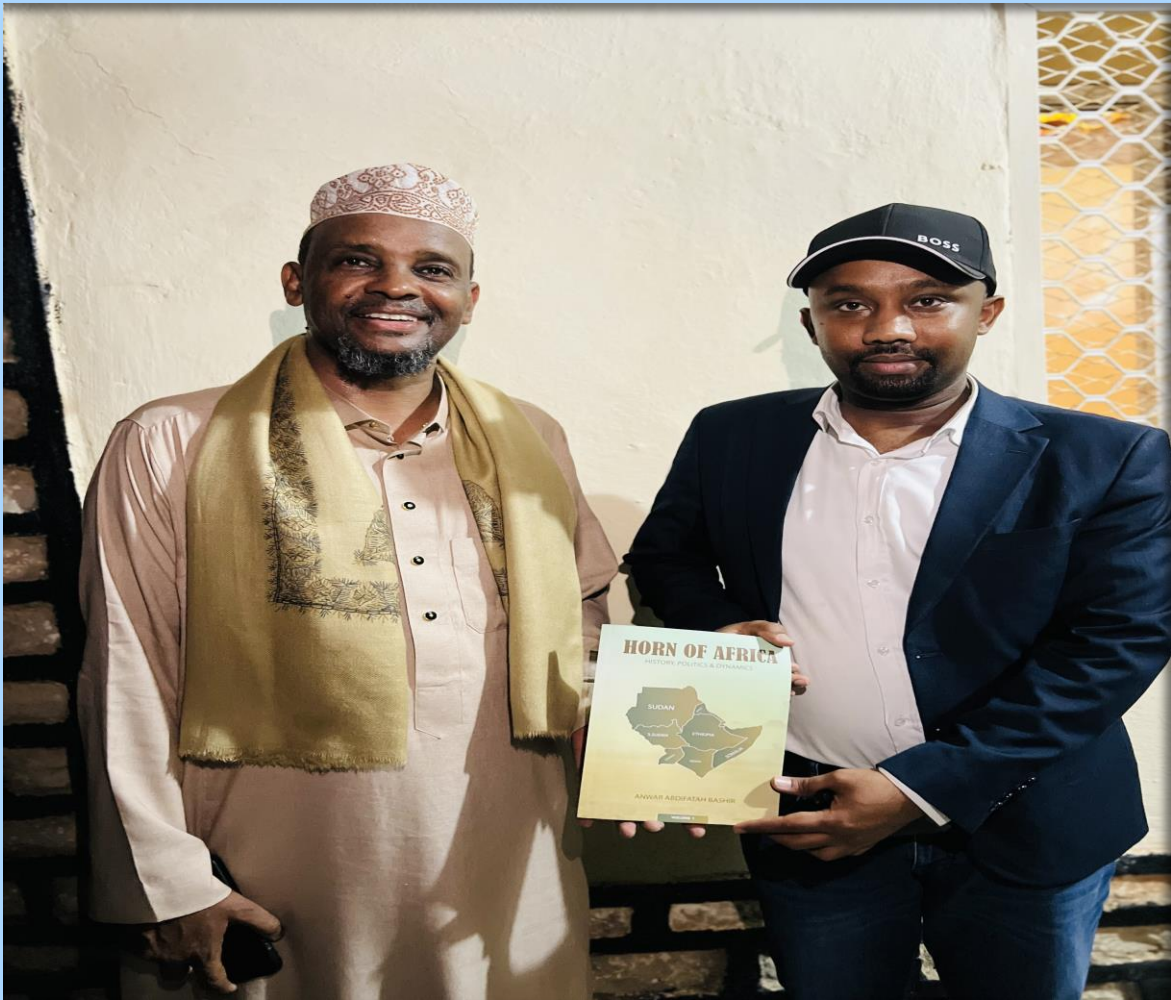
I paid a courtesy visit to Abdirahim Ali Ismail, the mayor of LasAnod at his office. He was elected officially by the local people in June 2021. He updated us on the background and current development in the city. Previously, the Mayor had worked with Somaliland administration during their presence in the city. My first impression was that, the Mayor is insightful person who knows the local context as he was elected by the local people. During our discussion, we chill-out and had a fun. At the end, I gifted him to my book where he humbly received it.



With Mayor Abdirahim Ali Ismail

Meeting with the Garaads

As per plan, I paid a courtesy visit to the traditional elders of SSC/Khatumo, especially the “**Dhulbahante Tribe**” of Garad Jama Garad Ismail and Garad Mukhtar Garad Ali Burale at their houses. Their reception was incredibly unparalleled. We had a fun and exchanged jokings based on the Somali traditions and cultures. Each one of them, I gifted to my book where I told that, the Nobel History of the Dervish Movement is part and parcel of the contents in the book.



With Garad Mukhtar Garad Ali Burale

Meeting with the Leader/would-be president of SSC/Khatumo Administration at his palace

Finally, I paid a courtesy visit to the leader/would-be president of SSC/Khatumo, His Excellency Abdikadir Ahmed, nicknamed as “**Firdhiye**” at his palace. It did not take to us too long to meet with him. He respectfully stood up as we entered into his reception room. We shook hands and had an unofficial discussion as the president had other commitments. Without rhapsodizing, from my end, he was relevant, charming and has deep-rooted insights on the ragtag politics of Somalia. I really enjoyed our deliberation on the current status of the emerging SSC/Khatumo administration. At the end, I gifted my book to him, and he had received and acknowledged.



With his Excellency Leader/President Abdikadir Ahmed (Firdhiye)

Visiting and taking pictures at the Shuhadaa Monument

At the heart of the city, there is an eye-catching monument which creates a very upsetting remembrance where two youngsters were killed by the Somaliland forces as they were protesting against Hargeisa's presence in the city. The billboard is named as "**Monument of Shuhadaa**".

The monument is always busy as many strangers/visitors come and takes pictures. At the end, we took several pictures of it.



With Caawiye and Roble (East African Institute Team) at the Monument of Shuhadaa

Conclusion

As the Executive Director of East African Institute for Peace and Governance, I shared with the Honorable local authority with our plan as an institution for conducting research and dialogues for the near future at LasAnod Insha'Allah.

Finally, my deep gratitude goes to my young brother and co-worker Abdihakim Mohamud, known as “**Caawiye**” for his unwavering support of touring us around, and his facilitation role of meeting with the high-profile individuals, especially the leader of SSC/Khatumo and the traditional leaders of Garaads.

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